

RECREATION & COMMUNITY
ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING

A G E N D A

TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE

May 19, 2009 - 6:00 P.M. – Council Chambers - Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

AGENDA ADOPTION:

1. Bicycle Plan Review
2. Committee Member Comments

ADJOURN:

TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE BICYCLE PLAN

A. INTRODUCTION

In November 1994, the Chincoteague Town Council expressed interest in developing a bicycle plan as part of a state road improvement project. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) informed the Town that in order to be eligible for VDOT Funding for projects that involve bicycle facilities, the local government must have adopted a bicycle facilities plan.

In January 1995, the Town Council requested that the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC) provide technical assistance in developing a bicycle plan. The Commission agreed to provide assistance to the Town under the A-NPDC Transportation Planning Technical Assistance Program. After adopting the plan on October 6, 1997 the Town recognized the need for a continuing planning effort with regards to bicycling needs and formed the Bicycling Advisory Committee in December 1999 to fulfill this function. The ~~Bicycling Advisory Committee~~ **Recreation and Community Enhancement Committee** is responsible for updating the Town's Plan and providing advice on bicycling needs to the Chincoteague Town Council.

Purpose of Plan

The Chincoteague Bicycle Plan is intended to meet VDOT's Virginia Bicycle Facility Resource Guide requirements for local governments to have an adopted bicycle facilities plan in order to receive project funding. In addition to transportation needs, the plan also identifies bicycling recreational needs.

A Virginia Guide for Bicycle Facility Planning outlines the following seven guidelines for an acceptable plan:

1. The plan must be approved by the local government.
2. The plan should have goals, objectives, and policies.
3. The plan should have a map of the major trip origins and destinations of bicycle riders.
4. The plan should have a map(s) of the existing and proposed bicycle facilities.
5. Along with the map(s), the plan needs to have a narrative about each of the proposed facilities which includes Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), posted speed, and road width for roads on which the selected routes have been placed.
6. A listing of the types of improvements and programs (e.g. on road, off-road, encouraging commuting, etc.)
7. Proof of public involvement in the development and approval of the Bicycle Plan should be shown. A Bicycle Advisory Committee is recommended that includes citizens, some of whom are bicyclists. A public hearing to review the plan should have been held.

According to The Virginia Bicycle Facility Resource Guide any bicycle plan should include the following :

- goals and objectives
- existing bicycle facilities and roadway network
- planned bicycle and roadway improvements
- significant attractions and destination points
- routes and/or locations of proposed bicycle facilities, including ancillary facilities such as bike storage and rack
- indication of preferred facility type, such as wide outside lane, bike lane, and shared use path
- prioritization of projects (short-term versus long-term)
- strategies for implementation including identifying potential funding sources,
- developing conceptual maintenance plans, and assigning operational tasks to agencies
- documentation of public involvement activities
- definitions and acronyms
- appendices and bibliography

Planning Process

The Town of Chincoteague Bicycle Plan was initially developed by the ~~Public Works~~

Bicycle Committee, with technical assistance from A-NPDC staff. The plan shall be

revised, and if need be, updated every four years ~~It is revised on a regular basis by the~~

Town's Recreation and Community Enhancement ~~Bicycling Advisory~~ Committee.

The public will continue to be involved by the workshops sponsored by the committee.

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71 B. BACKGROUND

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73 The Town of Chincoteague is located on Chincoteague Island, which is part of the
74 Eastern Shore of Virginia. Chincoteague Island is accessible from the mainland via
75 Route 175, a primary state road. The Town is approximately 7 miles long by 1 ½ miles
76 wide, and is approximately 12 square miles in area. The population of Chincoteague is
77 approximately 4,000. The summer population is estimated to be 14,000.

78 The Town is well known as the home of the Chincoteague Ponies, which live at the
79 nearby Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge and Assateague National Seashore. The
80 refuge and national seashore attract visitors year-round, and along with recreational
81 boating and fishing, are the basis for Chincoteague's large tourism economy.

82 The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Park Service (NPS) maintain
83 bicycle trails through the refuge and national seashore, providing access for wildlife
84 observation and swimming at Assateague Beach. The Chincoteague National Wildlife
85 Refuge estimated ~~20,365~~ **66, 924** bicycles entering the refuge **during the 2008 calendar**
86 **year** ~~for the twelve-month period ending July 1, 1997.~~

87

88 Bicycling on Chincoteague has become increasingly popular over the years, with visitors
89 riding from their motels to the refuge, beach, stores, and other destinations on the island.

90 There are bicycle shops that rent bikes, as do several motels and stores. Bicycle clubs

from Maryland and Virginia sponsor annual rides to Chincoteague. The development of bicycle paths on Chincoteague is supported by the following transportation goal in the 2002 Town of Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan (page 63):]

GOAL: Promote a transportation system that will provide for the safe, efficient, and convenient movement of people and goods by road, water, and pedestrian means.

The Comprehensive Plan outlines several objectives in order to implement this goal. Including the following:

OBJECTIVE: Create bike paths in areas susceptible to heavy bike traffic. Through this Bicycle Plan the Town hopes to develop better bicycle access to improve safety and enhance the image of Chincoteague as a great place to live and visit.

C. CYCLE FACILITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Because bicycles are considered vehicles in Virginia, they are permitted on all roads except for limited access highways. Unfortunately, most roads were not designed to safely accommodate motor vehicles and bicycles at the same time. This can result in

conflicts. As motor vehicles encounter bicycles on narrow roads, traffic slows down. Drivers move into the oncoming lane to pass bicycles, posing a threat to themselves and oncoming traffic. Many bicyclists feel unsafe under these conditions and avoid riding. The planning and development of proper bicycle facilities allows for the free flow of motor vehicle and safe bicycling. The design standards for a “proper” bicycle facility depend on the type of bicyclist, width of road, traffic volume, and average vehicle speed. In order to plan proper bicycle facilities, standards have been developed to ensure the needs of the “design bicyclist” are met by the “facility design”.

Design Bicyclist (Move to Appendix A)

~~Engineers use the idea of a design bicyclist to determine the type of bicycle facility design needed. There are three types of bicyclists: advanced, basic, and children, as follows:~~

~~Group A—Advanced Bicyclists: These are experienced riders who can operate under most traffic conditions and prefer direct access to destinations via the existing street and highway system. They should have enough road width to reduce the need for motor vehicles or bicycles to change position when passing.~~

~~Group B—Basic Bicyclist: These are casual or new adult and teenage riders who are less confident of their ability to operate in traffic without special provisions for bicycles, such as marked lanes. They need either low speed, low traffic streets or designated bicycle~~

137 facilities.

138
139 ~~Group C Children: These are pre-teen riders whose roadway use is initially monitored~~
140 ~~by parents. Eventually they ride on their own to schools, parks, stores, and other~~
141 ~~neighborhoods. They need to ride on residential streets with low motor vehicle speeds~~
142 ~~and volumes: roads with well defined separation of bicycles and motor vehicles; or on~~
143 ~~separate bike paths.~~

144
145 ~~Because Group B and Group C have similar needs, engineers combine these in a design~~
146 ~~bicyclist model with two broad classes of bicyclists: Group A (advanced) and Group B/C~~
147 ~~(basic/children).~~

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149 ~~Bicycle facilities should be designed to meet the needs of the least skilled bicyclist~~
150 ~~expected to use the facility. Since schoolchildren and tourists with children are a major~~
151 ~~part of Chincoteague's bicycling activity, the Town's bicycle facilities should be~~
152 ~~designed for the Group B/C bicyclist.~~

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155 D. EDUCATION AND SAFETY

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157 One goal of the Bicycling Advisory Committee and the Town is to promote bicycling
158 safety by educating the bicycling public on rules of the road and hazard awareness. The

Committee will regularly prepare, revise and distribute a brochure and other literature towards this effort.

In November of 2008 the Town of Chincoteague completed a “School Travel Plan,” which was a requirement in order to be considered for funding through the Safe Routes to School Program. The “School Travel Plan” is aimed at promoting and finding solutions for children to walk and ride their bikes to school. The “School Travel Plan” and the Bicycle Plan have similar goals and objectives, although the Bicycle Plan is general in nature. The Town should continue to request funding for safety programs that will help teach children bicycle and pedestrian safety.

In 2004 the Town also had a professional video completed that highlighted bicycle safety on the Island. The Town should utilize this video to remind citizens about bicycle safety. Try to set a system of playing the video on local access Cable TV, or via the internet through the Town’s website. Show this video at least once a year preferably in the Spring or Summer when bike ridership is high. Make sure the schools have a copy of the video to show children during school time.

E. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Trip Origins and Destinations

Mapping the locations of bicycle trip origins and destinations provides the basis for determining logical bicycle routes on Chincoteague. Trips originate where people live,

so the origins are spread throughout the island. **Most** concentrations of trip origins are the motels ~~along Main Street and Maddox Boulevard~~, as well as the campgrounds and bicycle rental shops. Destinations can be divided into recreation, businesses, and public services. The following locations of trip origins and destinations are shown on the attached map.

Trip Origins

Town Neighborhoods

Vacation Homes

Rental Homes

Motels/ Hotels

Bed and Breakfast Inns

Campgrounds

Bicycle Rental Shops

Trip Destinations

Assateague National Seashore

Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge

Oyster Museum

Tourist Information Center (Chamber of Commerce)

Island Businesses

Town Harbor

Town Dock

205 Memorial Park

206 Schools

207 - Elementary

208 - High School

209 Churches

210 ~~Downtown~~

211 Stores

212 Post Office

213 Town Office (Municipal Complex)

214 Police (Municipal Complex)

215 **Robert N. Reed Downtown Park**

216 **Carnival Grounds**

217 Existing Facilities

218

219 ~~The existing bicycle facilities on Chincoteague consist of the bicycle lanes on Maddox~~
220 ~~Boulevard from the Refuge to Chicken City road, and shared lanes on the rest of the~~
221 ~~roads and streets in town. However, Most of the streets in town are not up to VDOT~~
222 ~~bicycling standard due to the narrow width and/or the presence of parking. The attached~~
223 ~~map delineates the existing facilities, **which included extended shoulders which bring**~~
224 ~~**relief to both vehicular and bicycle traffic.**~~

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226 Needs Assessment

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228 An analysis of the trip origin and destination and the existing facilities shows that the
229 major need for bicycle facilities is to get tourists from their lodgings to the refuge/beach
230 and to the stores and services on Maddox Boulevard and Downtown. Based on this
231 analysis, the following bicycle facility needs were identified:

232

233 Priority

Solution: _____

234 1. Chicken City Road - Church St.

1. Widen existing paving to allow

235 to Maddox Blvd. **(Continued Concern)**

bicycling shoulders.

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237 2. Maddox Boulevard – from Main St.

2. Prohibit on street parking and

238 to Deep Hole Road.

provide new parking lots. Stripe a

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bike lane. Alternative: Stripe Ocean

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Boulevard, Taylor St., and Hallie

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Whealton Smith Drive for alternate

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routes.

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244 3. Hallie Whealton Smith Drive

3. Pave and stripe.

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246 4. Church St. – from Main St. to

4. Prohibit parking on Church Street

247 Chicken City Road / Ridge Road

or limit to 10 minute parking in front

248 intersection.

of the Opportunity Shop. Also

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widen and stripe from Fowling Gut

250		to the Chicken City Road / Ridge
251		Road intersection.
252		
253	5. Main St. – Hallie Whealton Smith	5. Acquisition of property and
254	Drive to Beebe Road.	constructing a bicycle path on Main
255		St. along the water’s edge and
256		prohibit parking in the downtown
257		area, striping bicycle lanes.
258		
259	6. Maddox Boulevard – From the	6. Provide separate bike path and
260	Chamber of Commerce (traffic circle)	and improve access at the circle.
261	to the Assateague Bridge. <u>(Continued Concern)</u>	
262		
263	7. Path from Eastside Road to	7. Acquire easements for the
264	Maddox Boulevard via. Maddox	construction of a separate bicycle
265	Family Campground.	path to connect Eastside Road and
266		Maddox Boulevard.
267		
268	8. Fowling Gut Path (“The Canal”) —————	8. Property acquisitions to erect
269	running down the center of the Island. —————	a separate bicycle path along
270		Fowling Gut.
271		

- 272 9. Chicken City Road Extension. 9. Widen the road and pave
273 shoulders.
274
- 275 10. Eastside Road. 10. Widen and pave shoulders.
276
- 277 11. North Main Street – from 11. Widen and pave shoulders.
278 Hallie Whealton Smith Drive to
279 the turn circle.
280
- 281 12. South Main Street – from Bunting 12. Pave shoulders.
282 Road to Curtis Merritt Harbor.
283
- 284 13. Bunting Road. 13. Widen and pave shoulders.
285
- 286 14. Beebe Road. 14. Widen and pave shoulders.
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288 F. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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290 The following Goals and Objectives have been outlined to guide the development of
291 bicycle facilities and programs on Chincoteague:

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- 293 1. GOAL: Improve bicycling access

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- OBJECTIVES:
- A. Develop a comprehensive, island-wide system of bicycle routes.
- B. Improve the marking signage of existing and future bicycle facilities.
- C. Implement a review of bicycle facility needs with each capital road Project.
2. GOAL: Enhance bicycle safety.
- OBJECTIVES:
- A. Decrease hazards confronting bicyclists and increase roadway capacity for motor vehicles.
- B. Educate the traveling public on bicycling safety.
- C. Implement a program of bicycle safety and enforcement.
3. GOAL: Encourage bicycle facility development.

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Expand the island bicycle system as state road improvement project budgets allow.
- B. Incorporate the implementation and maintenance of the island's bicycle system into the Chincoteague public works program.
- C. Seek grant funding to provide for bicycling transportation and recreational needs.

4. GOAL: Improve and diversify the tourism economy.

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Promote tourism by enhancing the awareness of bicycle accessibility to the island's natural and historic points of interest.
- B. Promote recreational bicycling on Chincoteague.
- C. Conduct one bicycle special event each year.

341 G. PROPOSED BICYCLE FACILITIES

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343 The Map shows the bicycle facilities proposed for the Town of Chincoteague. The
344 following narrative describes the proposed facilities, including Average Annual Daily
345 Traffic (AADT), Average Speed, and Road Widths.

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347 Priority

348 1. Maddox Boulevard – from Main St. to Deep Hole Road.

349 AADT: 8,800 Average Speed: 30 (25 posted) Road Width: 25'

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351 2. Church St. – from Main St. to Chicken City Road / Ridge Road intersection.

352 AADT: 4,500 Average Speed: 30 (25 posted) Road Width: 20'

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354 3. Main St. – Hallie Whealton Smith Drive to Beebe Road.

355 AADT: 9,100 Average Speed: 30 (25 posted) Road Width: 25'

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357 4. Maddox Boulevard – From the Chamber of Commerce to the Assateague Bridge.

358 AADT: 7,400 Average Speed: 30 (25 posted) Road Width: 25'

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360 5. Path from Eastside Road to Maddox Boulevard via. Maddox Family Campground.

361 AADT: N/A Average Speed: N/A Road Width: N/A

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363 6. Fowling Gut Path (“The Canal”) running down the center of the Island.

364 AADT: N/A Average Speed: N/A Road Width: N/A

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366 7. Chicken City Road Extension – Maddox Boulevard to Deep Hole Road.

367 AADT: 1,200 Average Speed: 25 Road Width: 20'

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369 8. Eastside Road.

370 AADT: 3,500 Average Speed: 30 (25 posted) Road Width: 20'

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372 9. North Main Street – from Hallie Whealton Smith Drive to the turn circle.

373 AADT: 1,200 Average Speed: 30 (25 posted) Road Width: 20'

374

375 10. Main Street – from Bunting to Inlet View Campground

376 AADT: 2,700 Average Speed: 30 (25 posted) Road Width: 24'

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378 11. Bunting Road.

379 AADT: 2,000 Average Speed: 30 (25 posted) Road Width: 22'

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381 12. Beebe Road.

382 AADT: 1,200 Average Speed: 25 Road Width: 20'

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384 H. RECREATIONAL PLAN

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The Map also shows the bicycle facilities proposed for the Town of Chincoteague for recreation.

A. Hallie Whealton Smith Drive

-A separate recreational loop.

B. Main Street – from Hallie Whealton Smith Drive to Beebe Road

-A route comprised of a separate facility along the waterfront.

C. Fowling Gut – North and South Corridor

-A separate facility along the canal.

D. Maddox Boulevard

-A separate facility from East Side to Piney Island and connecting to Maddox Boulevard.

I. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Policies

The following Policies will guide the implementation of bicycle facility development on Chincoteague:

- 409 1. ADMINISTRATION of the Town's bicycle program, including
410 distribution of information and planning of special events, shall be under
411 the direction of the Town Manager.
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- 413 2. COORDINATION of street/highway improvements and planned bicycle
414 facilities with VDOT and other state and federal agencies shall be the
415 responsibility of the Town Manager.
- 416
- 417 3. MAINTENANCE of the Town's bicycle system shall be the responsibility
418 of the Public Works Director.
- 419
- 420 4. FINANCING of bicycle facilities shall be provided through VDOT's
421 statewide transportation improvement program and various grant sources
422 as applicable.
- 423
- 424 5. SAFETY EDUCATION AND LAW ENFORCEMENT for the Town's
425 bicycling program shall be the responsibility of the Chief of Police.
- 426

427 **APPENDIX A**

428 **DESIGN BYCLIST**

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430 **Engineers use the idea of a design bicyclist to determine the type of bicycle facility**

design needed. The following are from the Federal Highway Administration. There are three types of bicyclists: advanced, basic, and children, as follows:

Group A – Advanced Bicyclists: These are experienced riders who can operate under most traffic conditions and prefer direct access to destinations via the existing street and highway system. They should have enough road width to reduce the need for motor vehicles or bicycles to change position when passing.

Group B – Basic Bicyclist: These are casual or new adult and teenage riders who are less confident of their ability to operate in traffic without special provisions for bicycles, such as marked lanes. They need either low-speed, low-traffic streets or designated bicycle facilities.

Group C – Children: These are pre-teen riders whose roadway use is initially monitored by parents. Eventually they ride on their own to schools, parks, stores, and other neighborhoods. They need to ride on residential streets with low motor vehicle speeds and volumes: roads with well-defined separation of bicycles and motor vehicles; or on separate bike paths.

Because Group B and Group C have similar needs, engineers combine these in a design bicyclist model with two broad classes of bicyclists: Group A (advanced) and Group B/C (basic/children).

Bicycle facilities should be designed to meet the needs of the least skilled bicyclist
expected to use the facility. Since schoolchildren and tourists with children are a
major part of Chincoteague's bicycling activity, the Town's bicycle facilities should
be designed for the Group B/C bicyclist.